

FLATHEAD COUNTY LONG RANGE PLANNING TASK FORCE

MEETING MINUTES (unapproved) THURSDAY, January 11, 2007

Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 4:05 p.m.

Roll Call

Members Present

Jed Fisher
Gary Hall
Jeff Harris
Dennis Hester
Charlie Johnson
Don Hines
Mike Pence
Joe Russell
Tom Jentz
Jim Patrick
Velvet-Phillips-Sullivan
Turner Askew
Kerry Finley
Jane Leivo
Karen Reeves
Myrt Webb
Chuck Roady
Pam Kennedy

Members Absent

Mike Meehan
Marsha Sheffels
Bob Horne
Bill Shaw
Diana Blend
Richard Surynt

Others

Mayre Flowers
Rob Carlin
Kathy Barbaledos
Rebecca Shaw
Jeff Key

Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m.

Agenda Approval

Velvet Phillips-Sullivan moved to approve agenda, Joe Russell seconded. All in favor.

Old Business

Presentation of Principles of Civil Dialog/Mayor Pam Kennedy and Commissioner Gary Hall

Mayor Pam Kennedy: The committee (Flathead on the Move *Turning Strangers into Neighbors* project) ascertained a grant from Anders family foundation to develop a different way of looking at communication in the Flathead Valley. More than 100 people were trained in the Transition Framework and Collaborative Change Approach. The committee created

Principles for Civil Dialogue. The nine principals that make up this “living” document provide guidance for how we communicate in our communities. Karen Reeves moved to adopt principles for civic dialogue as communication guidelines for the task force. All approved. Guidelines are as follows:

Principles for Civil Dialogue

Turning Strangers into Neighbors

A project of Flathead on the Move

1. We provide a safe environment where individual perspectives are respected, heard, and acknowledged.
2. We are responsible for respectful and courteous dialogue and participation.
3. We respect diverse opinions as a means to find solutions based on common ground.
4. We encourage and value broad community participation.
5. We encourage creative approaches to engage public participation.
6. We value informed decision-making and take personal responsibility to educate and be educated.
7. We believe that respectful public dialogue fosters healthy community relationships, understanding, and problem-solving.
8. We acknowledge, consider and respect the natural tensions created by collaboration, change and transition.
9. We follow the rules and guidelines established for each meeting.

Approve October Minutes

Velvet motioned to approve and Joe seconded. All were in favor.

Nomination and election of new “Co-Chairman”

Nominees – Don Hines (7 votes); Velvet Phillips-Sullivan (9 votes)

Velvet Phillips-Sullivan is new Co-Chairman

Discussion/Action on amendment to bylaws re: Staggered terms/membership-Resolution 1785A, final discussion...

Discussed options including:

- Going back to original membership defined prior to September 18th
- Adopting 1785A

Joe made a motion to adopt the document, Velvet seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The rules pertaining to a “quorum” will be reviewed by Dennis Hester and discussed at the next meeting.

New Business

Flathead National Forest “New Forest Revision Plan” – Supervisor of the Flathead Forest

Kathy Barbaledos –

The Forest Service has been working on a new forest plan which focuses on desired conditions, suitability and futures. Flathead, Bitterroot and Lolo National Forests were the first forests for this to be applied to. The new plan will be the guide to work towards the desired future of our forests.

The plan is to release the plan during fall of 2007, then during winter/spring of 2008 resolve objectives and get to a final plan.

With regard to the objection process (a question raised by Chuck Roady) Kathy reports that they have started giving this some thought and the current thinking is that they would attempt to get objections/appeals up front, before the decision is finalized.

With the plan comes an environmental management system – a means to improve our impact on the land. Will assess the activities that have the most impact on the land (e.g. roads, timber sales, noxious weeds)

The plan is being designed so that it can be easily updated as conditions/social pressures change.

Rob Carlin – Access, wilderness and timber suitability were the primary areas of comment on the plan.

Robert Peccia and Associates – County Transportation Plan update - Rebecca Shaw and Jeff Key

The planning board contracted Robert Peccia and Associates for a Flathead County Transportation Study.

There are two studies, one for Kalispell, and one for Flathead County. These are overseen by the City of Kalispell, Montana Department of Transportation and Flathead County.

Jeff Key covered the process for the Kalispell Study:

A four step process

- Inventory transportation – (e.g. use counters for traffic)
- Analyze the data to see where problems are
- Forecast the future – (“the crystal ball”)
- Evaluate forecasts to determine best transportation improvements

Population and employment are inputs to the traffic model from a planning perspective – where will the population reside and where will the employment hubs be?

Additional studies include: 1) safe routes to evergreen schools and 2) a statewide safe routes to schools guidebook – for any jurisdiction to develop a safe routes to school plan.

The Flathead County Transportation Study will entail the following steps:

- Review growth policy (transportation section)
- Develop roadway typical sections (i.e. based on traffic volume, this is the typical section that you need to have for this - e.g. paved, gravel.)

- Select intersection turning movement counts and LOS (line-of-sight) analysis at 16 intersections.
- Initial corridor observations for 10 corridors.

Growth Policy Update – Jeff Harris

Planning board finished their work reviewing the plan on 12/11. On Tuesday, the county commissioners held the first workshop to consider planning board's recommendations. The neighborhood plan has received majority of the focus.

Commissioners slated to approve in June.

County Status Report – Mike Pence

Nearing completion on closing out the capital improvement program. Targeting February 15th to submit to county commissioners for approval. It will be referenced as part of the budget process. Flexibility is built into the plan – as issues come up, changes can be made.

Reorganize committee's that Task Force want/need to be active and set direction

Commissioner Gary Hall - when talking with planning office, the LRPTF committees gave great recommendations for the growth policy.

What should our next area of focus be? (e.g. Affordable housing? Land use? Waste disposal?)

Myrt Webb - Where do we want development to go – and how do we encourage this? Where do we not want development to go? This is a critical thing for us to do. E.g. transportation problems are being caused by land use – so the key to solving this problem is to focus on land use.

Turner Askew – We need to get back on track with what needs to be done and how we need to do it.

Gary – Any further dialogue about which direction to go can be emailed to him.

Karen Reeves - Let's get together in one month – it will be important for us to make some decisions about what our focus will be so that we can generate some momentum around it.

February 8th will be the next meeting.

Task Force Member Comment Period

None.

Public Comment Period

Mayre Flowers – This meeting was not on the commissioners agenda. I learned a lot and congratulate the county on the Construction Improvement Program.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.